

THE HUMOROUS SIDE OF LIFE.

Curious
Conceits of the
Funny
Men Seen and
Described.

"Too bad about that McChesney-Water-
boy race being called off!" remarked the
fat man. "But if the horses are as fast as
the papers say they are, of course it's only
a question of which horse could get away
first. The second they were off the race
would be practically over."

"Why? Why, just because they're both
so fast? Look at the famous Excavation-
Followon race at the Lily Park track out
in Jones county ten years ago."

"Never heard of it. And you're a racing
man? Why, I don't pretend to follow the
ponies, but I saw that race."

"Followon was a fast finisher just like
McChesney is supposed to be, while Excava-
tion was more on the Waterboy type and
ran from the drop of the flag."

"On the big day most every one in Jones
county was on hand and the rails fairly
groaned with the weight of the crowds.
The betting was slightly favored Followon,
owing to his well-known finishing powers."

"At 3:45 Excavation was not wanting in backing.
The flag, the old cry of 'They're off,' went
up from the crowd, and the race was on."

"Excavation got away slightly in the
lead and slowly increased his advantage
until he was flowing by the first turning post
he was a length to the good."

"Followon will get him in the stretch,"
said the wise ones.
"On the line. At the end of the second
turning the horses were cutting such a
perfect race that they were completely
lost in the dust they raised."

"Then the unexpected happened.
Excavation was seen to rear
and stop short. Excavation tore on."
"Excavation, Followon, come on!" shouted
the frenzied crowd. "She's been pulled!"

"But later, as Excavation galloped down
the stretch on easy winner and the dust
clouded away some, the crowd saw what
had really happened."

"Excavation had been flying along with
such terrific speed that he had raised the
whole track in dust, leaving a yawning
chasm behind him. Followon had to
wait fully fifteen minutes on the brink
before enough track settled for her to trot
home on."

"And that, sir, is why I firmly believe
that in a really fast race the horse that
gets off first will have the call."



Poverty.
They said this had a rich perfume.
I don't see what they meant.
It strikes me that it's very poor.
It hasn't got a scent.



An Alarm.
Thomas T. - Well! Now that these men
have got to flying I suppose that next thing
they will be crowding us out of all
the desirable trees looking for nest room.



AT HIS WITS' END.

A HOUSE PARTY IN THE SOUTH.

High Play at Poker Among the
Guests of a Planter Owner
Before the War.

"I could not pretend to have any fami-
liarity with fashionable society even if I
had any desire to do so," said the gray-
haired, young-looking man in the club
smoking room. "But I must confess that
I am considerably amused at times by
what I read of the happenings among
society people. And among other things,
the stories of what they call house parties
seem to stand out as peculiarly enjoyable
to the reader who happens to know what
a house party was in the days before the
civil war in Southern States."

"In the days of slavery the South was
dotted all over with enormous estates,
some of them comprising thousands of
acres, which were to all practical purposes
independent principalities."

"I had the good fortune to spend a week
as the guest of a guest at one of these
plantations near Tusculum, Ala., when I
was a great deal younger than I am now,
and some of the incidents of that visit
are as clear in my mind as they were the
day they happened."

"I say I was the guest of a guest, for I
had never seen the host till I entered his
house, nor had I ever heard of him till he
saw me. But I was visiting an old school
friend, Roy Gwaltney, at Tusculum, when
he was ridden to the wedding festivities
of Robert Matthews's oldest daughter,
and he took me with him as a matter of
course."

"There were probably sixty guests on
the place when Gwaltney and I rode out
there on horseback. And before the day of
the wedding there must have been twenty
or thirty more. The great mansion ac-
commodated fully one-half of these, but it
was reserved entirely for the ladies. Mr.
Matthews being the only man who slept
in the house."

"Each of his six sons, all unmarried men,
had a cottage of his own near the great
house, and in these cottages, or offices, as
they called them for some reason which I
never understood, the men guests found
ample accommodation."

"But oh! the fun there was on that plan-
tation that week! In the first place, before
breakfast, there were shooting and riding and
billiards and flirting, and Lord knows what.
And every night there was dancing."

"And after the dancing there was card
playing, not in the big house, but in the
offices. Some of the games were mil-
lions. I played in a 50-cent limit game myself,
but there was a small crowd of hard players
who met in Harry Matthews's little parlor
every night after the ladies had left us,
who played table stakes, each man begin-
ning with a hundred dollars in chips each
night, and that turned out to be a three
cent bet before the week was up."

"I don't think Mr. Matthews, the father,
knew positively about the playing, for
they told me he didn't approve of cards,
after he was 40 years old; but he prob-
ably had his suspicions, knowing his sons
pretty well. However, he did not interfere."

"The prejudices of the father were not
shared by his sons, for they all played,
and Harry, the eldest, was known as a high
roller. He was of age, however, and in-
dependently rich by inheritance from his
grandfather, so his father could hardly
have interfered if he had desired to. I
do not know whether he was the peace-
loving chap, who laughed when he lost, and
I do know that the stiffest game I ever hap-
pened to see was played in Harry's parlor
that week."

"Probably I wouldn't have known any-
thing about it, but Gwaltney said to me
quickly one night just before the party broke
up."

"I don't think I'll play poker to-night."
It was a little surprise to me, for he was fond
of the game, but I said:

"That's not a bad idea. I have a few
night's sleep to make up myself."

"Sleep," he exclaimed, "I'm not thinking
of sleep. Time hanging for that when we
go home. But I'm thinking we can get
more excitement looking on than we can
playing our limit game."

"It had come to be talked about, quietly,
that the table stakes had gone on to a
no-limit proposition, and that there
was some desperate play to be seen. This
he told me, and then went on to say that
there was an additional interest in the con-
test by reason of the fact that three of the
players were avowed suitors for the hand
of one of the young ladies in the house-
hold."

"It's pretty hard to say which has the
inside track in the race," said Gwaltney,
"but it's a safe bet that Bob Carruthers
won't win. I don't say that his poverty is
a bar, but he's worse than poor."

"His father died a year ago and when
they came to settle his estate it was found
that he had gambled it all away, and that
Bob, who was only a child at that time, was
left with a mortgage of eighty thou-
sand. And I don't think he has a thousand
to the good."

"That might not disqualify him entirely,
but he is a born gambler, and though he
is not, perhaps, any worse than Harry or
Cannon, they can afford to play and he
can't. So Miss Julie's parents oppose him
vigorously."

"I hear that he has won two or three
thousand this week, but that is liable to
go on a single hand, and he'd be hard
pushed to raise as much more. There's
no great friendship among the three men,
though, and I wouldn't be surprised to
see some interesting doling to-night."

"Well, naturally, you couldn't have
kept me out of Harry's parlor with guns
after that, so Gwaltney and I went over
there after the dance broke up, and the
three men were already at the table, and
the third was fifth seat, for there were only
four men in the house-party who cared
to play in so stiff a game, was held by a
cousin of Gwaltney's, named Harding."

"They were just beginning the play,
with a hundred apiece in chips each, but
I noticed that each man's pocketbook
was open, and that the chips were useful
only as change and for convenience in the
ante. The important bets were made
with banknotes."

"It was almost necessarily so, for the
ante was \$5, calling \$10, and when a
bet a dollar, Cannon had kings up and
pot was made it meant \$50 in the pot before
the deal."

ABROAD, BUT AT HOME.

Lochinvar Leary Has Plans for a New Route
to Germany with a Short Cut Back.

"Can you tell me," Lochinvar Leary
asked, "where I'd be likely to be able to
charter a boat capable of housing about
500 people for five or six days?"

"Of course, if it had a trifling bit of ma-
chinery in it and could go by itself for a
matter of a mile or two, so much the better.
But that isn't at all essential; all I really
need is the boat itself."

"I've been reading in the newspapers of
the hundreds and hundreds of Americans
swillin' for Europe every
week, and I don't see
why I shouldn't come
in for a fair share of
the money they spend,
do you? 'If Lochin-
var Leary can take
em for a week on the
ocean, feed 'em and
sleep 'em, and then
land 'em safe and
sound in demost
Germany, then why
shouldn't he?"

"What's more, isn't it
better that they
should spend their money
right in their own country
than to be squandering it
abroad in some one else's
country. That's what I say."

"That's what I say," Lochinvar Leary, "an organ-
izer of the Leary-International Transatlantic Line
of ocean dashboards, plyin' between New
York and Germany."

"If I can charter a boat for one week
for \$500, why for \$500 more I ought to be
able to get two pilots, a German street
band of three pieces, eight German writers
in sailor suits, and a couple of barrels
of crackers, sauerkraut and sausage, as-
sorted."

"Five hundred passengers at \$100 a pass-
age would make \$50,000, and say \$10,000 for the
losses of the harbor and pool rights would
bring it up to \$60,000."

"Deducting expenses, there ought to be a
small matter of \$40,000 or so left for Lochin-
var Leary, president, captain and personal
conductor of the international ocean
dashboards."

"You don't understand? Why, it's so
simple a babe in arms could work it. Let
me explain my scheme."

"The floating palace Schontenholzen,
laden as above, will set sail if it has sail,
or be towed by pilot if it hasn't sail, from
New York harbor late on Saturday after-
noon. We calculate to reach the three-
mile limit about the time our passengers
get to bed. Then, everything being in the
most comfortable, we'll try and get a
favorable, our pilot will
leave us and we'll
cast anchor."

"During the night,
sailings will be
spread on the land
side in order to shut
out the view, and next
morning, for all any
one of the passengers
knows, we may be
scurrying along on the
bosom of Mother Ocean, hundreds of miles
from shore."

"Skin game? You wrong me, sir. One
part of the ocean's just as suitable and
beneficial for a sea voyage as any number
of parts. Just so long as you don't see land,
why what's the difference?"

"The air will be just as good, the drinks
just the same and the motion even greater."
"But how about Germany, you ask?
I'm coming to that."

"At the end of five days our ship's a
record-breaker. You know we'll cover
a boat of the evening bow and row in the
pilot. Just so to make the pilot pool
fair and interesting, we'll try and get
a different pilot from the one that brought
us out."

"When we have taken on the pilot we'll
weigh anchor and steam slowly back into
port again, being careful, of course, to let
the sailings on our New York and Statue
of Liberty side."

"With good weather we ought to be able
and he let five hundred, which was the
only play I saw that night that seemed
to me to show poor judgment, seeing that
there was a capot in the draw after his
loss."

"Carruthers made it a thousand more,
and Matthews called, thinking it a bluff.
Then Cannon studied, and I reckon he
had made up his mind to call, but he sus-
pected the bluff and that he was confident
of beating Matthews. Anyhow, he called.
So Carruthers cleaned up over \$5,000
in that pot."

"The next two pots were certainly cork-
ers. Carruthers opened a jack pot that
had been made again by default, and all
four men stayed, the last man, Halsey,
raising it a hundred."

"Halsey raised, making eight
hundred in the pot. Carruthers drew
three cards and caught a third king, where-
upon he bet the size of the pot. Matthews
in like eye now and he raised, and then,
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